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JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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Hamilton elected new MBC president



PRAYER OF ENCOURAGEMENT — Michael Catt (standing), senior pastor of Sherwood Church in Albany, Ga., prays for pastors and staffers of Mississippi Baptist churches during his sermon at the closing session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention's annual meeting Nov. 2 at First Church, Jackson. Catt, the executive producer of the movies *Flywheel*, *Facing the Giants*, *Fireproof*, and *Courageous*, is a native of Pascagoula. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Messengers unanimously pass resolution supporting Initiative 26

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Messengers from the Mississippi Baptist Convention's cooperating churches met at First Church, Jackson, on Nov. 1-2, electing David Hamilton, pastor of West Heights Church in Pontotoc, to a first term as president and unanimously passing a resolution supporting the hard-fought campaign to enact a state constitution initiative known as the Personhood Amendment to declare that human life begins at the moment of fertilization.

Hamilton was elected without opposition and replaces Gary Richardson, pastor of North Oxford Baptist Church in Oxford, who completed two terms in office and was not eligible for reelection.

He was nominated by Clarence Cooper, pastor of Brandon Church, Brandon, and the nomination was seconded by Dan Robertson, missions director for Golden

Triangle Association in Columbus.

Matt Buckles, pastor of First Church, Vicksburg, was elected without opposition to a first term as first vice president. He replaces Paul Crowley, pastor of Woolmarket Church, Biloxi. Barry Corbett, pastor of First Church, Kosciusko, nominated Buckles, and the nomination was seconded by Gene Henderson, messenger from Pinelake Church, Brandon.

Chris Aldridge, pastor of Freedonia Church, New Albany, was elected to a second term as second vice president in a race with Andy Fullington, pastor of Shiloh Church, Sontag. There were no vote totals for the two candidates in the meeting minutes.

Aldridge was nominated by Rex Yancey, pastor of First Church, Ripley, and the nomination was seconded by Rickey Blythe, pastor of First Church, New Albany. Fullington was nominated by Archie Herrin, missions

director for Tri-County Association in Columbia. The nomination was seconded from the floor.

Michael Weeks, pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch, was elected without opposition to continue his service as convention recording secretary. Jerry Bingham, missions director for Benton-Tippah Association in Ripley, was elected without opposition to continue serving as assistant recording secretary.

The resolution supporting Initiative 26, also known as the Personhood Amendment, quoted Jeremiah 1:5-6 and called on Mississippi Baptists to vote "Yes" on the initiative that appeared on the Nov. 8 statewide general election ballot. Results of the voting were not known at press deadline for this issue of *The Baptist Record*.

The theme of the annual meeting was, *Telling the Story: A Life, A Cross, A Tomb, A Living Lord!* The official messenger count was

948, a decrease from the 1,025 messengers who attended the 2010 annual meeting.

Messengers also unanimously adopted a 2012 Cooperative Program budget of \$32,329,059, a two percent decrease from the 2011 Cooperative Program budget of \$33,001,945. The 2012 challenge portion of the budget, which accounts for any funds given above and beyond the adopted budget goal, was set at a prorate share of the entire budget.

The state convention share of the 2012 budget will decrease 4.2% from \$12,148,993 in the 2011 budget to \$11,635,872 in the 2012 budget, which is 36% of the total budget. The percentage of the total budget dedicated to Southern Baptist causes will rise from 35.25% in the 2011 budget to 36.25% in 2012, making the Southern Baptist Convention section of the 2012 budget the largest single item.

In addition to the Initiative 26 resolution, messengers

See "Convention" on page two

HIS HEART HIS HANDS HIS VOICE

MISSIONARY APPOINTMENT SERVICE
Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2011 • 7 p.m.
Temple Baptist Church
Hattiesburg

See page 9 for a complete listing of the resolutions passed at the 176th Mississippi Baptist Convention.



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That smell isn't coming from the tourists

Most of us remember the remarks of patrician U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid upon the December 2, 2008, opening of the Capitol Visitor Center (CVC) near the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.:

In the summertime, because (of) the high humidity and how hot it gets here, you could literally smell the tourists coming into the Capitol, and that may be descriptive but it's true. Well, that is no longer going to be necessary.

Reid's candid assessment of the people who paid for the magnificent facility was the unfortunate highlight of the grand opening. There were other, equally-unfortunate highlights.

"For months, widespread reports of a scrubbing of references to our religious heritage from the CVC have been circulating. I received firsthand confirmation upon my visit. The six-year, \$621 million project, a 580,000-square-foot underground complex beneath the eastern side of the Capitol, might best be described as an insult to our nation's rich religious heritage and our founding fathers' acknowledgment of and reliance upon God," wrote Doug Carlson, then a staffer in the Washington, D.C. office of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville. "To be certain not to overlook anything, I inquired of multiple CVC staff whether the center includes references to our nation's religious heritage. The four echoed similar refrains: 'No, not really. I don't think it includes anything.'" Carlson wrote. "Whether the whitewashing of our religious heritage has been careless oversight or calculated maneuvering, an undercurrent by some contingents to

expel all things religious from the public square is evident."

Among the items of religious heritage listed as missing from the CVC by Carlson is the text of the Pledge of Allegiance, which contains the phrase, "One nation, under God." He also reports that a CVC engraving had to be quickly plastered over because "E Pluribus Unum" (Latin for "Out of the Many, One") was described as the Nation's Motto.

"In God We Trust," of course, is the Nation's Motto, officially replacing "E Pluribus Unum" by an act of Congress more than 50 years ago.

Rick Tyler, founding director of Renewing American Leadership in Washington, D.C., wrote in the March 2009 issue of Focus on the Family's publication, Citizen, that at least one document on display omits the original wording, "...in the year of our Lord..." All the document's other wording is accurate, but "...in the year of our Lord..." is absent.

"Missing from the CVC is Benjamin Franklin's call to prayer, at the Constitutional Convention, presidential proclamations calling our nation to days of prayer, fasting, thanksgiving, and remembrance and most significantly demonstrated in the close of the Declaration of Independence where the (signers) make an appeal to the 'Supreme



THREE YEARS IN — Emancipation Hall during December 2, 2008, opening ceremonies of the new Capitol Visitor Center in Washington, D.C. (Special photo courtesy of Architect of the Capitol)

Judge of the World for the rectitude of (their) intentions' and declare 'with a Firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor,'" wrote Tyler.

How could the planners of this massive recounting of American history accidentally leave out so many religious references that are so important to the development of this country? The answer is — it couldn't have been unintentional.

There are forces in America today that would like nothing better than to wipe away all references to religion from this country's public life and discourse, and those forces are growing. That's not alarmist; that's a fact. The CVC scandal is proof.

When will we have the boldness to assert the truth that we are, indeed, "One nation, under God?" Hopefully we'll stand up and be counted before it's too late, but time is slipping away.

So. Baptists help bring life back to disaster victims

OFUNATO CITY, Japan (BP) — A hush falls across the room when the odd-looking Americans arrive. The Japanese discreetly check out the bright red hair. They whisper about the oversized clothes in primary colors. They touch their own noses, mentally comparing to the round red ones of their visitors.

The team from New Hope Church in Fayetteville, Ga., quickly breaks the ice with big smiles and over exaggerated waves. An 86-year-old Japanese woman waves back and blows a kiss. When the red-headed American feigns catching it and falls over from the sheer force of the imaginary kiss, the crowd erupts in laughter. The Georgians take the uncharacteristic outburst by the stoic Japanese in stride.

After all, that's what clowns do — bring laughter and joy.

For some in this temporary housing unit, it's the first big laugh since March 11 when the earthquake and tsunami wiped out their small fishing village. When the laughter grows, "Deano T. Clown" hams it up even more. He knows it is an important part of the healing process for those who endured so much physical and emotional pain.

"Laughter is one of those universal languages," the veteran clown explains. "It's therapeutic. Our hope is that at least for a moment, the survivors can forget the issues of life they face right now and just laugh."

It's been several months since the waves crashed down on Ofunato City. There's nothing left of this community built along the harbor, just empty foundations and piles of rubble waiting to be recycled.

The government's temporary housing units — small, prefab houses made of aluminum — squeeze onto any open, flat space up the mountain road, overlooking the obliterated city and prompting memories that most would rather forget.

The spectacle of Deano T. Clown and "Mrs. Uppington" clomping through their housing complex in oversized shoes is a big enough distraction to help with this quest. Most have never seen a clown in person.

Curtains part and faces peek out to see the impromptu parade. The clowns' bright makeup and clothes are a stark contrast to the colorless surroundings of these units. Doors open and residents excitedly pour into the small community room. Even the construction workers put aside their tools and join the procession.

"This is the most people out of their unit I have ever seen," the social director says, smiling at the immediate impact of this clown ministry.

It is often hard to get survivors to leave their housing units because of depression. Moving on with life has been a hard and slow process. More than 20,000



SMILING HELPS — "Deano T. Clown" helps a Japanese girl ring a bell in one of the antics among survivors of Japan's earthquake and tsunami performed by clowning volunteers from New Hope Church in Fayetteville, Ga. (BP photo)

people died and more than 100,000 lost their homes.

An estimated 158,000 people in this Tohoku region lost their jobs due to the tsunami's destructive path — the fishing industry was practically destroyed, factories were demolished and most stores have not reopened.

IMB missionaries Tak and Lana Oue say "heart care," like this, is one of the top priorities in this stage of disaster relief. When community leaders told them it was time for the people to move on with their lives — to laugh and be cheered, they knew it was time to bring the clowning ministry from Georgia.

The community room is so packed, there's barely enough space for the clowns to perform or for the SOCs (Supporters of Clowns) to offer coffee and tea. Faces peer through all of the windows and crowd the doorway.

The clowns' silly antics bring smiles, applause and laughter. Deano T. Clown grabs volunteers from the audience and teaches them to spin plates on a rod. Mrs. Uppington challenges Deano T. Clown to contest after contest, each ending in some funny disaster.

Smiles by all ages are big and wide — or rather, everyone is smiling except Mrs. Uppington.

"Deano, my heart hurts," Mrs. Uppington says as the audience leans in closer to hear more. As she describes losing her home, friends and family members and how she feels so alone, Mrs. Uppington tips apart a paper heart. Several nod their heads in acknowledgement. They understand how she feels.

Since the earthquake, tsunami and ongoing nuclear disaster, depression and suicide are rampant. The country already had one of the highest suicide

rates in the world, but new figures show the number of deaths has risen by 39% since the triple disaster. More than 3,281 people committed suicide in the month of May alone. Some of these deaths have been in the housing units where IMB missionaries visit with ministry teams like New Hope's.

Deano T. Clown takes the torn heart and gently places it inside an empty box called "life." He explains that Jesus can heal all wounds, including a broken heart. He hands Mrs. Uppington the box and she takes out a whole heart. The crowd breaks out in cheers. A few have tears in their eyes.

In many of these housing units, it's the first time ministry teams have been allowed to share the Gospel so openly. This area of Japan is known to be the most resistant, with less than 1 percent claiming to be Christians.

"We use humor and clowning to gain entrance and let them know the love of Jesus," Mrs. Uppington explains. "Sometimes, as clowns, we are able to share more openly than we would if we wore street clothes."

After the show ends, survivors shyly approach the clowns. They want to take their picture with them, not to mention try to figure out all of the illusionist-type tricks they perform. The SOC members of the clown troupe circulate the crowd, offering drinks and a listening ear. The laughing continues well after everyone walks out the door.

"It felt good to laugh," a smiling 86-year-old Kashima Saito says. "The clowns are very funny. Events like this are very encouraging and keep our spirits up."

It is this attitude of "never give up" that impresses the New Hope team the most. After hearing so many stories of survival, they understand tragedies on a whole new level — a way that cannot be described in a story or shown on television.

"People are so resilient. They are survivors," Deano T. Clown says, pointing to his new friends Shiro and Ritoko Ogasawara as an example. "Life will never be the same here, yet they keep moving forward."

Looking back

10 years ago

Wayne VanHorn, pastor, First Church, Columbus, is chosen as president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

20 years ago

Paige Patterson of Dallas, one of the chief architects of the conservative movement within the Southern Baptist Convention, is allegedly dismissed as president of Criswell College in Dallas. Patterson states the move was due to a "philosophical difference."

50 years ago

Every Mississippi Baptist church and every one of the 77 Baptist associations have been urged to organize for temperance action according to the program suggested by C.M. Day, Director of Temperance Activities for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Convention, continued from page one

passed three other resolutions without discussion, including:

- Appreciation to First Baptist Church, Jackson, for hosting the annual meeting.
- Gratitude to Bettye Rogers Coward, the first female president of Baptist-affiliated Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain, who will retire in June of next year.
- The 400th anniversary of the founding of the first English Baptist Church by Thomas Helwys and fellow believers, in the Spitalfields section of London.

James Lewis, pastor of DeSoto Hills Church, Southaven, presented the convention sermon. Michael Catt, senior pastor of Sherwood Church, Albany, Ga., preached in the Nov. 2 final session of the annual meeting. Robert Jeffress, pastor of First Church, Dallas, provided the Bible Treasures series of devotionals. Worship and praise were provided by:

- Worship Choir, Orchestra, and Praise Team from North Oxford Church, Oxford, led by Tom Wilson, minister of music at North Oxford Church.
- Mississippi Singing Churchmen, conducted by Milford Valentine, minister of music at Prentiss Church, Prentiss.
- Celebration Choir of DeSoto Hills Church, Southaven, led by Mark Manning, minister of music at DeSoto Hills Church.
- Mississippi Baptist convention Orchestra, conducted by David Young of the Church Music Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.
- Combined Choirs, led by John Clendenning, minister of music at First Church, Brandon.
- Red Roots Trio from Wade Church, Moss Point.

According to the 2010 annual of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, there are 2,127 cooperating churches in the convention with a total membership of over 697,000. The U.S. Census estimated the total Mississippi population in 2010 to be 2,967,297.

The 2012 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention will take place at First Church, Jackson, on Oct. 30-31.



NEW OFFICERS — David Hamilton (center), pastor of West Heights Church in Pontotoc, was elected to a first term as President of the Mississippi Baptist Convention on Nov. 1 during the convention's 176th annual session, held at First Church in Jackson. Messengers from the convention's 2,100 cooperating churches elected Hamilton without opposition. Joining Hamilton as officers of the convention for the coming year are (from left) Chris Aldridge, pastor of Freedom Church, New Albany, second vice-president; Matt Buckles, pastor of First Church, Vicksburg, first vice-president; Michael Weeks, pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch, recording secretary; and Jerry Bingham, missions director for Benton-Tippah Association, Ripley, assistant recording secretary. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)

2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)

3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)

4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

BIBLIOPHER

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004
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WKH ORUG LV LQ KLV
KROB WHPSOH, WKH
ORGU'S WKURQH LV
LQ KHDYHQ; KLV
HBHV EHKROG, KLV
HBHOLGV WUB, WKH
FKLOGUHQ RI PHQ.

SVDOPI HOHYHQ: IRXU

Clue: W = T

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Matthew Twenty-Five: Forty

A LONE GOOSE

It was October and already I had seen several gatherings of Canada Geese flying south. Some were in V-formation and one in a W-formation. It was early just at sunrise when I heard a Canada Goose long before I saw it. I started scanning the sky in the direction I thought that the honking was coming from, and finally way off in the distance flying low was one Canada Goose. This goose was honking, flapping his wings, and going south all by himself. My first thought was that it was probably a male who had for whatever reason separated from the rest of the flock and would not stop and ask directions. Or I thought maybe he was not very popular and the rest of the geese had snuck off while he was asleep to get away from him. Since I did not know why he was flying all alone, I called to him and asked if I could talk to him a minute. He said, "What?" I said, "I just wanted to ask you something." He slowed up and flew over my way.

I asked the Canada Goose why he was all alone and not in a group. He said, "I don't want to fly with the group. I do not need them and they do not need me so I just fly by myself. I do not need them to eat, sleep, fly, or swim so I just go alone." I said, "You sound just like some people expressing their feelings about the church. They do not need the church and the church does not need them so they just go out on their own." The goose responded, "They may be smart people." I said, "Well, maybe but probably not. I do not know about your situation, but I do know of people who really need the church although they think they don't and the church really needs them though they think they do not." At that, the old goose honked with about a half of a honk or maybe about a fourth of a honk as though he did not agree with what I was saying.

Simply trying to reason with him, I said, "Have you thought about that sometime you may get hurt or shot and need some geese around you who will care and help provide for you while you are healing?" He honked, "Don't need them!" I could tell that he was getting a little testy and irritated with my point of view, but I still thought that it was important to try to encourage him to get with the larger group. I said, "What if you get off course while you are flying over the Gulf of Mexico and really do not know what direction to go? Don't you think that some geese could help guide you?" He said, "No!"



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

I asked the old goose, "Do you know Margaret Mead?" He said, "No! Is she a goose?" I replied, "No, she was a famous anthropologist and studied the development of people and civilization." To that he could hardly muster a small honk.

I said, "Well, the reason I asked was that years ago someone asked Margaret Mead when she began to dig and study at a site what was the most revealing thing that indicated a civilization was emerging?" Margaret Mead said, "A broken femur that has healed." The old goose just stared at me. I explained, "What she was saying was when they found someone who had a broken leg bone that had healed, it was obvious that someone had cared for them because there is no way to keep on hunting, working, and traveling if you have a broken leg bone. Someone needs to help you. I am not sure how it all works in the goose world, but God created people to need people and not only that, people need to be needed by people."

I could tell the goose was listening but not participating. I continued, "There are spiritual reasons that are far more significant. I have discovered that whether they know it or not people need the church. Equally I have discovered that the church needs them." With that the goose stretched his neck out and stepped around like he was going to fly off but he did not. He tucked his wings back next to him and waited for me to say more. "Among human beings as well as in so many orders of life we are dependent on one another and God in His great wisdom sent Jesus to do something in us and for us to be connected to others that would make a world of difference in our community setting. You can see it in a beehive, or in a pack of wolves, and especially in human beings. God had something wonderful in mind when He created this special capacity for relationships. We need each other and each of us is needed by others." I could tell the goose had just about all of the sermonizing from me that he wanted. It was a look that I had seen on the faces of people while I was preaching, and on this day I saw it on the face of a goose. He politely told me that he had to get on his way. With a sort of a

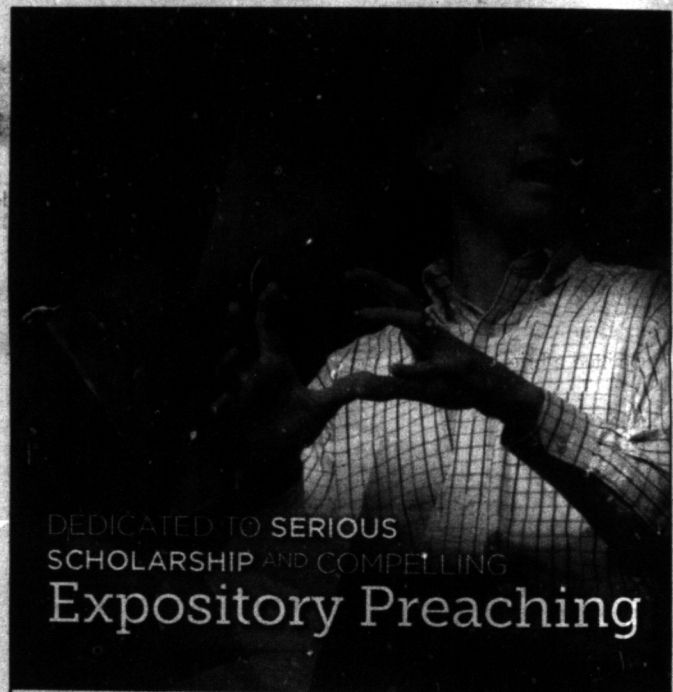
run he flapped his wings, spread them wide, and lifted his huge body off the ground and into the sky he went.

It was interesting because as he gained altitude he was squawking, honking, and then I heard other honkers who apparently had seen him and were flying in the direction that he was going. Gracefully, he wheeled around and flew back toward them and fell in line in a perfect V above me. It may have just been my imagination, but he seemed to kind of flap his wings at me, waving thanks for the

help. The whole group of geese continued to fly south. He had found a group that he could join.

As they flew off into the distance, I thought to myself that I wished I could convince people how significantly they need each other in the Lord's work. The church may not be perfect but the Savior is perfect. The church may not have all of the solutions for life and all of the answers for the different questions, but when it comes down to the great needs of life the Lord has provided for us to be surrounded by people who care or for many of us to be some of those people who care. I do not believe that the Lord made any of us to be a lone goose in this world. You and I need the church and thankfully the church needs us, so don't be a lone goose.

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Supreme Court: Ruling on Utah crosses will stand

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Supreme Court's refusal to halt the removal of memorial crosses across Utah's highways could impact religious symbols in other western states and even nationwide, social conservative groups are warning.

The high court announced Oct. 31 it would not take up a case from the U.S. Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals in which a three-judge panel last year ordered the removal of more than a dozen 12-foot-tall, six-foot-wide crosses throughout Utah honoring state troopers killed in action. That panel said the crosses, placed near the trooper's site of death, amounted to an unconstitutional government establishment of religion and that a reasonable observer would conclude "the state of Utah is endorsing Christianity."

The full Tenth Circuit subsequently refused to take up the case in a 5-4 vote, and the Supreme Court also refused, with only Justice Clarence Thomas saying, in a 19-page dissent, that the court should have acted.

Because the Tenth Circuit also covers Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wyoming, the case's impact could be felt elsewhere.

"None of their crosses on public property will be tolerated either," said Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council, which submitted a brief supporting the crosses, "and if this decision is ever applied nationally, as FRC's amicus brief pointed out, Arlington National Cemetery and other landmarks would have to be completely dismantled."

"Of course, the irony is that these roadside crosses are not only constitutional, but they also represent the very values that our Constitution celebrates."

Tony Perkins is not related to William Perkins, editor of The Baptist Record.

The fact that the Supreme Court did not take the case left



STRUCK DOWN — Utah crosses like this one memorializing the ultimate sacrifice of a state trooper will have to be taken down after the U.S. Supreme Court declined to review a lower court ruling that ordered the removal. (BP photo)

conservative groups puzzled. Just last year, Justice Anthony Kennedy, in a separate church-state case that allowed a cross on California public land to remain, wrote in a majority opinion that the "goal of avoiding governmental endorsement does not require eradication of all religious symbols in the public realm."

"A cross by the side of a public highway marking, for instance, the place where a state trooper perished need not be taken as a statement of governmental support for sectarian beliefs," Kennedy wrote in that case, *Salazar v. Buono*.

The Constitution does not oblige government to avoid

any public acknowledgment of religion's role in society."

The case was brought by a group called American Atheists. The Alliance Defense Fund, a Christian legal group, represented the Utah Highway Patrol Association in the case.

"It is baffling that the Supreme Court did not take this case, in light of the fact that just last year they said that roadside memorials to fallen troopers would not violate the establishment clause," said Byron Babione, senior counsel with the Alliance Defense Fund.

Ken Klukowski, director of the Center for Religious Liberty at the Family Research

Council, said Thomas' dissent suggests that only crosses bearing government insignia are impacted by the court's denial. The crosses themselves are privately funded, although they do bear the Utah Highway Patrol official symbol and most of them are on public land.

Each cross has the trooper's name, rank, and badge number, along with the year he or she died, biographical information, and a picture.

"If so, then perhaps by removing the police logo the crosses might survive a second round of litigation, and other crosses would be spared," Klukowski wrote in a column

for the Washington Examiner. If not, though, then "follow-up cases are likely to remove all roadside crosses — such as those supported by MADD — and crosses from all federal, state, and local parks and buildings in the six states comprising the 10th Circuit."

Ed Whalen, president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center and a blogger at National Review.com, surmised that the court may not have taken up the case because it did not think it was the ideal case to clear up Establishment Clause confusion. For instance, Whalen noted, Thomas mentioned that families were not allowed to pick any symbol other than a cross.

Conservative groups took heart in Thomas' dissent, in which he gave an historical overview of recent Supreme Court church-state decisions and concluded they were a "mess" that had led to confusion.

In one famous pair of cases issued on the same day in 2005 that involved public property, the Supreme Court left alone a Ten Commandments monument in Texas but said a Ten Commandments display in Kentucky must be removed. A sarcastic Thomas wrote, "A display of the Ten Commandments on government property... violates the Establishment Clause, except when it doesn't." He also cited confusing cases related to crosses, creches, and menorahs.

"Today the Court rejects an opportunity to provide clarity to an Establishment Clause jurisprudence in shambles," Thomas wrote. He poked fun at the Tenth Circuit's reliance on the "reasonable observer" test but then wrote, "To be fair to the Tenth Circuit, it is our Establishment Clause jurisprudence that invites this type of erratic, selective analysis of the constitutionality of religious imagery on government property."

Opposites debate religion, elections at National Press Club event

WASHINGTON (BP) — Two evangelical pastors from opposite ends of the political spectrum found common ground Nov. 2 in a discussion concerning the role religion will play in the 2012 presidential elections.

Jim Wallis, CEO of Sojourners, and Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, met at the National Press Club to address the issues that should concern America's next president and the voters who will elect him.

Although they had differing opinions about numerous subjects, Land and Wallis both hoped to demonstrate respect for each other by engaging in courteous conversation without attacking character.

"Richard and I disagree on nuclear weapons and Wall Street," Wallis said, "but we have carried on a civil discourse tonight."

Topics that were addressed by moderator Amy Sullivan of Time Magazine ranged from tax reform to foreign aid. Wallis offered opinions that Land strongly opposed, particularly pertaining to the Tea Party movement and Occupy protests.

Wallis said Wall Street is just as big a threat to the economy as Washington. "The concentration of power, the Tea Party will say, is the problem," Wallis said. "I agree with that, as long as we're honest and fair about economic power as well as political power."

Land said in response, "The Tea Party's aim is better than the Wall Street Occupiers' because the biggest problem is Washington, the biggest concentration of economic power is in Washington, and it was Washington policies that first pressured banks to give loans to people who couldn't afford them. If you're going to talk about aim, the Tea

Party's aim is pretty good. The problem began in Washington, and it will be solved in Washington."

Land also had words of advice for GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney involving his practice of Mormonism.

"If he is asked about his faith, he [Romney] should say 'If you want to know what my positions are on the issues and policies, go to my website or ask me,'" Land explained. "If you want to know what the beliefs of my religion are, call Salt Lake City." Land also said it is "un-American" to ask a presidential candidate to explain his personal religion.

The president of the ERLC referred to another GOP candidate who is popular in the news at the moment as well. Land accused Herman Cain of handling the sexual harassment allegations in an "amateurish" manner, saying Cain should be completely transparent and truthful.

Land also mentioned the complaints from friends of his that Cain is being treated differently from the way Bill Clinton was treated during accusations of sexual misconduct.

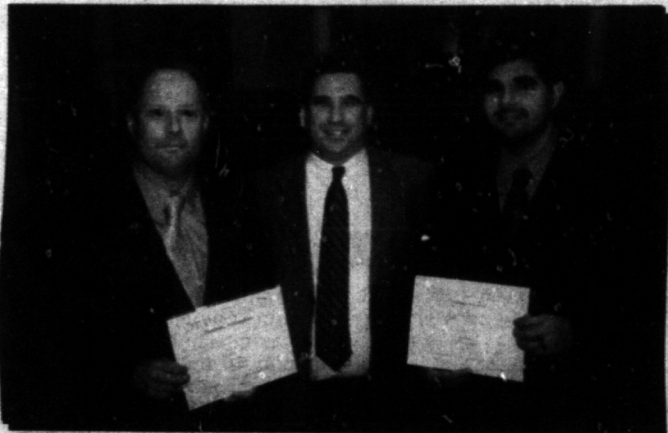
"When you're the traditional values folks, you're asking to be judged by a different standard," Land said. "If you're going to stand up for the traditional nuclear family, monogamy and morality, then you need to be monogamous and practice traditional morality. I hope Mr. Cain has."

Land and Wallis both agreed that the "hyperpartisan" nature of politics is harmful. "Obama pushed for a purple America between the red and the blue," Land said. "Washington is broken and hyperpartisan. People are fed up with a Washington that they think exists more for its own sake than for their sake."

JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. New Hope Church, Sumrall



2. First Church, Terry



3. Craft ordination



4. Wallace ordination

1. New Hope Church, Sumrall, recognized those who had perfect attendance in Sunday School. Shown are Bobbie Atwood, Joy Lowery, Richard Canty, Diane Canty, Linda Warren, J.W. Warren, Betty Stephens, Raymond Smith, Hershel Coulter, Charles Broome, and Linda Broome.

2. First Church, Terry, recently ordained Jeremy Hackler and Jeremy McDonald as deacons. Shown are McDonald, pastor John Pace, and Hackler.

3. First Church, Plantersville, recently ordained Thomas Craft as deacon. He is shown with his wife Sissy and pastor Danny Balint.

4. Bethel Church, Monticello, recently ordained Terry Wallace into the gospel ministry. Shown are Delma and Terry Wallace and pastor Michael Smith.

5. Mantee Church, Mantee, recently held a recognition service to recognize their Mission Friends, Gas, and Acteens. Shown are the participants.

6. First Church, Gautier, will host a community-wide Thanksgiving meal Nov. 19, noon - 4 p.m. Free. For more information call (228) 497-6236 and ask for Shelby.

7. First Church, New Albany, presented one year perfect attendance pins to James Hamrick, Tommy Baker, Tameri Dunnam, Joe Kirkland, Allen Dunnam, Dwayne Stroud, and Terry Goode. Ricky Blythe, pastor.

8. The Master's Hands Ministry of Tangipahoa Church, Summit, will perform Our Chains Are Broken at the church Nov. 13, 6:30 p.m.

9. DeSoto Church, Clarke County, was recognized by the Baptist Children's Village as the top church in per capita giving in the association.



5a. Mantee Church, Mantee



5b. Mantee Church, Mantee



5c. Mantee Church, Mantee



7. First Church, New Albany

See page 11 for guidelines for submitting news and photos from your church to The Baptist Record.

NYC students face graphic, required sex ed classes

NEW YORK (BP) — A new sex education mandate by the New York City Department of Education has drawn opposition from parents, congressmen and representatives of the True Love Waits abstinence movement.

Starting in January, the city will require students to take one semester of sex education in the sixth or seventh grade and one in ninth or 10th grade. Schools can choose the curriculum, but the city recommends a program called HealthSmart and another called Reducing the Risk, according to the New York Daily News.

HealthSmart in particular contains graphic lessons which many parents find objectionable, including

assignments that would have students cataloging condom brands at a local drug store, visiting a reproductive health clinic and browsing a provocative sex advice website.

True Love Waits, meanwhile, is advocating an abstinence option in New York City schools.

"Although True Love Waits is not directly involved in school abstinence programs, our team has long recognized that education is the first step in leading students to make a commitment to refrain from sex until marriage," True Love Waits spokesperson Dawn Cornelius said.

"We owe it to students to give them a positive message about the benefits of remaining abstinent until they get mar-

ried, and to warn them about the physical and emotional consequences that can result from premarital sex," Cornelius said in a statement circulated Nov. 3.

New York State law protects a parent's right to opt children out of any health and hygiene classes, including sex education, which conflict with the religious beliefs of the parent. The law also allows a parent to opt children out of all HIV/AIDS education through a written request to the principal if the children instead will be taught at home.

"It's wrong to force [parents] to choose between what the city is planning and no sex education at all. Parents who want a more traditional, abstinence-based sex education curriculum for their

children should be able to have that," said former Democratic assemblyman Michael Benjamin, who is leading an opposition group called the NYC Parents' Choice Coalition.

The Daily News said Reps. Michael Grimm and Bob Turner, New York City's two Republican congressmen, are supporting concerned parents who want an abstinence-based alternative curriculum.

Valerie Huber, executive director of the National Abstinence Education Association, pointed to recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention which said nearly 75% of 15- to 17-year-olds in the United States have not had sex.

"Why would we not support

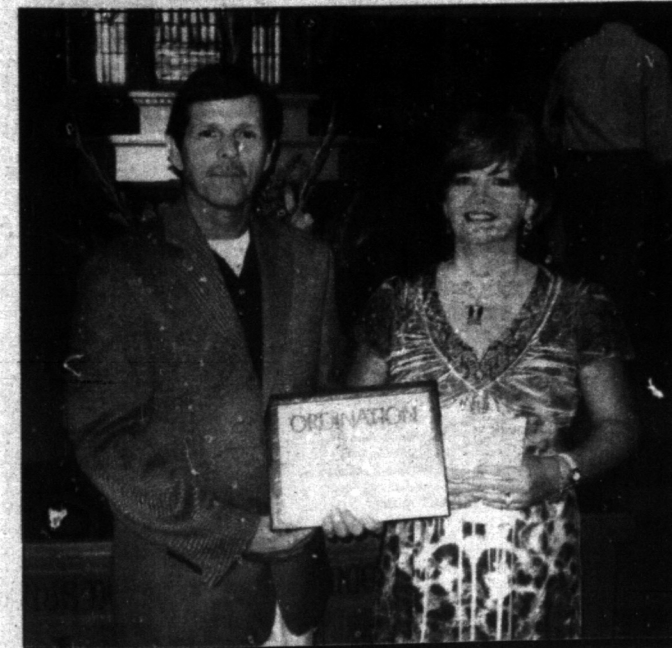
programs that reinforce those good decisions?" Huber told Baptist Press. "The NYC mandate avoids any priority on sexual risk avoidance, which is a mistake from a public health standpoint and from a scientific standpoint. It is an affront to the teens who want to make good decisions but are looking for adults to empower them in that pursuit."

New York City, Huber said, has a problem with sexual activity rates, sexually transmitted disease rates, and other risk behaviors among teenagers. The new mandate is part of a broader strategy the administration of Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced in August to improve the lives of black and Latino teenagers.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Babb licensing



2. Young ordination

1. Stanton Church, Natchez, licensed Randy Babb to the ministry Oct. 30. Shown is pastor Steve Purvis and Babb.

2. First Church, Kosciusko, ordained Jerry Young as deacon Aug. 28. He is shown with his wife Brenda.

3. Clear Creek Church, Oxford, ordained Luke Guest as deacon. He is shown with Mike Linton, pastor Charles Lipe, and AMD Jim Burke.

4. Kossuth Church, Alcorn Association, ordained Zack Howell to the gospel ministry Sept. 25. Shown, front row, are Donnie Schuman, Kenny Digby, Jerry Strickland, Gary Mitchell, Howell, and Mandy Howell; back row, Steve Jones, Doug Mitchell, Don Pace, Lynn Prather, Allen Spencer, and Hubert Bennett.

5. The ladies of the Upper Room Sunday School class of Neshoba Church, Union, hand made a quilt for a mission project. Shown are Earnestine Williamson, Doris Ashmore, and Cleta Boler.



3. Guest ordination



4. Howell ordination



5. Neshoba Church, Union

COLLEGE NEWS



1. MWU alumni

1. William Carey University hosted a reunion for the alumni of Mississippi Woman's College on October 21, on the Hattiesburg campus. In addition to graduates of MWC, some who graduated during the transitional years of William Carey College were in attendance. The reunion featured a luncheon in the Glass Room of Thomas

Business Building, with entertainment provided by Carey's Songbirds, a women's ensemble. Following the luncheon, the alumni toured Donnell Hall, which houses the Center for Study of the Life and Work of William Carey, D.D., and the Sarah Gillespie Museum of Art. Shown are some of the participants.

REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

1. Double Springs Church, Maben: 175th anniversary, Nov. 13; services, 10 a.m., followed by lunch and other activities.
2. Cedar Grove Church, Lena: Homecoming, Nov. 13; services, 11 a.m., followed by lunch and singing; current and former pastors, speakers; Henry Heitmann, pastor.
3. Conehatta Church, Conehatta: Revival, Nov. 13 - 18; services, 7 p.m. nightly; Randall Creel, speaker; Danny & Nancy Harrison, music; Jimmy Jones, pastor.
4. Mt. Olive Church, Okolona: Homecoming/Thanksgiving/Harvest Day Nov. 13; services, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch and music; includes a Thanksgiving message, dedication service, and special prayer for continued tornado recovery in the community; Marion Tumberlinson, pastor.
5. Broadmoor Church, Gulfport: Revival, Nov. 13 - 17; Sun., 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. nightly; David Ford, speaker; Gerald Simmons and Daniel Crews, music.

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Resolutions of the 176th Mississippi Baptist Convention

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION No. 1

WHEREAS, the 176th Annual Session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention has again been the beneficiary of the hospitality of the First Baptist Church of Jackson; and

WHEREAS, we the messengers of the 176th Annual Session have been blessed, guided, and challenged by the informative and inspirational program planned by the Committee on Order of Business, the institutions, and agencies of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, and the Convention officers and committees:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that with thankful hearts we express appreciation to:

Dr. Bob Gladney, executive pastor; the staff, and members of First Baptist Church of Jackson,

The speakers, singers, and instrumentalists who led us in worship during the convention,

Dr. Gary Richardson, our Convention President, who has led in his second year as president with the emphasis, Telling the Story...A Life, A Cross, A Tomb, A Living Lord,

All of the officers, members of all boards, trustees of all agencies and institutions, committee members, and volunteers, who have served this Convention faithfully.

RESOLUTION ON PERSONHOOD No. 2

WHEREAS, God told Jeremiah, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you. Before you were born I sanctified you," (Jeremiah 1:5-6); and

WHEREAS, God has provided the insight to research embryologists who have confirmed that life begins at the moment of fertilization; and

WHEREAS, we believe the very soul of an individual exists from conception; and

WHEREAS, in recent days many, including judges and politicians, have challenged God's authority regarding life by denying the right of those in the womb to be born; and

WHEREAS, the Southern Baptist Convention is on record in The Baptist Faith and Message as affirming our belief that "We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death" and has passed resolutions in several recent conventions in support of the right to life; and

WHEREAS, God, through the writer of Proverbs said, "Open your mouth for the speechless, in the cause of all who are appointed to die," (Proverbs 31:8); and

WHEREAS, the Constitutions of the United States of America and the State of Mississippi, in their respective Bill of Rights state, "No person shall be deprived of Life, Liberty or Property without due process of law;" and

WHEREAS, a proposed Amendment to Mississippi's Constitution defines the term "Person" as it is used in Mississippi's Constitution "to include every human being from the moment of fertilization, cloning, or the functional equivalent thereof;" and

WHEREAS, the Mississippi Baptist Convention is made up of individuals who believe that the right to life is one that is "endowed by our Creator" and not our government; and

WHEREAS, in our form of government, which has been called "a government of the people, by the people, for the people" the ultimate responsibility of governing rests with us, as individuals, and if we do nothing, evil will prevail; and

WHEREAS, the messengers of the One Hundred Seventy Sixth Annual Session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention acknowledge that "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23) and first and foremost, must show the world God's love which He has revealed to us through the example of His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, to everyone irrespective of their belief on this issue; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the messengers of the One Hundred Seventy Sixth Annual Session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention on Wednesday, November 2, 2011, at FBC, Jackson call on the members of the churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention to vote "YES: on Initiative Measure No. 26 on November 8, 2011."

RESOLUTION OF GRATITUDE No. 3

WHEREAS, Dr. Bettye Rogers Coward became the first female President of Blue Mountain College in February, 2001;

WHEREAS, her years of leadership and personal sacrifice have been marked by educational excellence, financial integrity, and exemplary Christian character;

WHEREAS, Dr. Coward led Blue Mountain to become a fully integrated co-educational institution after 133 years as a woman's college;

WHEREAS, she led the college to establish the first graduate program: the Master's Degree in Elementary Education;

WHEREAS, under Dr. Coward's leadership Blue Mountain College has been named among the top liberal arts colleges by U. S. News and World Report for seven consecutive years;

WHEREAS, she led the college to establish the first intercollegiate athletic program for men;

WHEREAS, Dr. Coward demonstrated visionary energy to design a campus master plan, renovate many buildings on the campus, improve much of the campus infrastructure, improve the appearance of the campus grounds, and construct an appealing and beautiful entrance to the college;

WHEREAS, Dr. Coward has led Blue Mountain College to achieve a record student enrollment and fueled the flame of Christ in the hearts of thousands of Blue Mountain students across the years;

WHEREAS, Dr. Bettye Rogers Coward created a contagious atmosphere of optimism and good-will among the thousands of Blue Mountain Alumni, among Mississippi Baptists, and throughout the field of higher education statewide and nationally;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this 176th Convention of Mississippi Baptists on November 2, 2011, expresses its wholehearted gratitude to Dr. Bettye Rogers Coward for her sacrificial service, her devoted leadership, and her splendid accomplishments for the glory of Christ.

The Education Commission:
Dr. Billy Morehead, Chairman
Dr. Dean Register, Vice-Chairman
Rev. Barry Corbett, Secretary
Mr. Steve Amman
Mr. Gerald Austin
Rev. Eric Boykin
Dr. Jeff Doremus
Dr. Dan Howard
Rev. Glenn Jackson
Dr. David Maron
Dr. Wayne McLeod
Dr. James Spencer

RESOLUTION No. 4

Regarding the 400th Anniversary of the First English Baptist Church

WHEREAS, many Baptist historians agree that the establishment of a Baptist church in Holland occurred in 1609 by a group of refugees from England who had separated themselves from the state-sponsored church of that country and this group along with other bands of believers in Jesus Christ formulated many convictions of Baptist beliefs, politics, and practices that characterize Baptists today; and

WHEREAS, in 1611 under the leadership of Thomas Helwys this small band of believers went back to England where they established their church at Spitalfields, a section of London, and set forth concepts that we cherish today as Baptists, such as the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the Bible as the sole written authority for faith and practice, salvation by grace through faith, believer's baptism, the priesthood of believers, the autonomy of the local church, religious

freedom for all, spiritual worship, and God-called ministry; and

WHEREAS, holding these beliefs cost these Baptists and likeminded believers dearly through the years; being considered traitors by their governments and heretics by the state-supported churches, they remained faithful and steadfast in spite of fines, imprisonment, banishment, public whippings, torture, and death; and

WHEREAS, after years of persecution our Baptist forefathers in the American colonies led the way in the struggle that finally brought religious freedom to the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the road that brought us to what we enjoy as Southern Baptists today in a free land is a bloody one, soaked with the blood of our Savior who died for our sins, with the blood of patriots who fought and died for political freedom, and with the sacrifice of Baptist witnesses and others who have died for the cause of personal salvation, religious freedom and biblical values; and

WHEREAS, major characteristics of Baptist life, such as evangelism, missions, cooperation, and religious freedom are evident in the nearly four centuries of the history of Baptists in our land and worldwide missionary endeavors as seen in departed heroes such as Williams, Clarke, Backus, Mather, Bunyan, Hart, Leland, Newton, Rice, Carey, Judson, Broadus, Manly, Johnson, Moon, Armstrong, Spurgeon, Van Ness, Gambrell, Frost, Carroll, Truett, Lawrence, Lee, Scarborough, McKinley, Mullins, Connor, Dodd, Sampey, Wallace, Naylor, Criswell, Sullivan, Hobbs, Rogers, and Leavell as well as thousands of other Southern Baptists and our own Mississippi heroes — Richard Curtis, Ashley Vaughn, M. P. Lowrey, Margaret Lackey, and many others; and

WHEREAS, Southern Baptists and Mississippi Baptists seek to continue to be a Great Commission people with a Great Commandment heart;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mississippi Baptist Convention meeting at FBC Jackson on November 1-2, 2011, remember this 400th anniversary, urge our fellow Mississippi Baptists to utilize this significant historical marker to retell the Baptist story, emphasize our evangelical beliefs and practices which we hold dear being given to us by our spiritual forefathers despite horrible persecution promote tribute to these Baptists of the past four hundred years, increase ways to remember our heritage, and challenge all Baptist key leaders such as pastors, staff members, deacons, mission leaders, and convention leadership to continue to hold high our Baptist heritage through appreciation, information, and celebration so that we may never forget our heritage in the Lord Jesus and the legacy of our spiritual heroes who have gone before us, causing us to be more faithful to Him who saves in the 21st century.

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DAMASCUS BAPTIST CHURCH, MADISON COUNTY MS IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR. Please mail resumes to the church at: PO Box 846, Flora, MS 39071. Attention: Pastor Search Committee.

FULL-TIME YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTER Gaston Baptist Church in Booneville, MS is seeking someone to give leadership in growing an established youth ministry, and provide direction in building a ministry to children. Please send resumes to Darryl Hatfield, Gaston Baptist Church, 1908 Gaston Road, Booneville, MS or gastonbaptistchu@bellsouth.net

OAK HILL IN MERIDIAN IS LOOKING FOR A PART TIME SECRETARY beginning January 1st. Interested persons can call 601-482-5583 or email a resume to mike.ohb@comcast.net

YAZOO COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION IS NOW RECEIVING RESUMES FOR THE POSITION OF ASSOCIATIONAL MISSIONS DIRECTOR. This is a bi-vocational position. Please mail resumes to 4794 Mechanicsburg Road, Bentonla, MS 39040, attention: Jimmy Wayne Pettis.

MURPHY CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH, LOUISVILLE, MS IS SEEKING A PART-TIME YOUTH DIRECTOR. Send resume and application letter to include 3 references to the Youth Director Search Committee, 5420 Bond Road, Louisville, MS 39339 or via email to ruffyfoster1@gmail.com

CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH IN BROOKHAVEN, MS IS SEEKING A PART-TIME MINISTER OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH. Resumes may be emailed to questions@cbcbrookhaven.org or mailed to P.O. Box 591, Brookhaven, MS, 39602.

NEW SIGHT BAPTIST CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN, MS IS SEEKING A BIVOCATIONAL MUSIC DIRECTOR. Send resumes to: Charlotte Newell, 1017 Common Street, Wesson, Ms. 39191 or email to wanchar2353@att.net

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Congressmen from both parties urge prayer for Obama

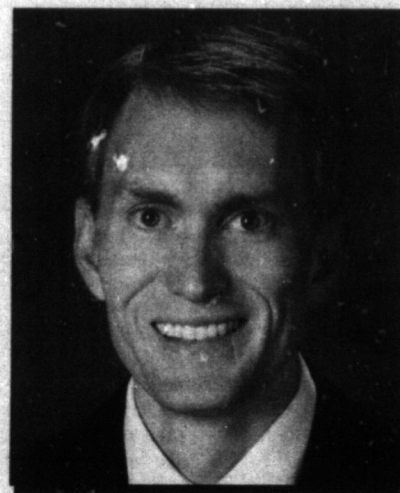
WASHINGTON (BP) — At the National Prayer Breakfast in February, U.S. President Barack Obama noted that his friend, Sen. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., prays for him.

"It's comforting to know people are praying for you who don't always agree with you," Obama said. "Even though we are on opposite sides of a whole bunch of issues, part of what has bound us together is a shared faith, a recognition that we pray to and serve the same God."

The conversations between Capitol Hill and the White House haven't been so lovey-dovey, but in early November, a freshman Republican and two Democrats dissipated a little of the acrimony.

The three congressmen — Reps. Dan Boren, D-Okla., Emanuel Cleaver, D-Mo., and James Lankford, R-Okla. — distributed to all 435 members of the House of Representatives a book titled, *Obama Prayer: Prayer for the 44th President*, by Charles Garriott, who ministers to those in the federal government through Mission to North America, an arm of the Presbyterian Church in America.

The congressmen included a letter with each book, where they wrote,



Lankford

"All of us who have served our nation as members of the House understand the place and significance of prayer. Over the years we have prayed for presidents Bill Clinton and George Bush Sr. and Jr."

They added that the book is "a means of encouraging specific and thoughtful prayer for President Barack Obama."

Lankford, a Southern Baptist, said, "We'll pray for those in authority... when we line up in the same party. [But] that's not the biblical mandate." He added that Christians should "pray for the president, no matter who he is."

The congressman then pulled out his iPad in the Speaker's lobby by the House floor during a vote to read from Proverbs 21:1: "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord."

Lankford said he's had good feedback from Republican members who received the book. "There are issues there, in Congress, with how we speak about each other," he said. "This is a place that sometimes feels like middle school. The more you criticize, the more you're encouraged."

Lankford was program director at the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma's high-profile Falls Creek summer camp from 1996 to 2009, but quit his position because he said he felt God was calling him to run for Congress.

He had no political experience. He is a member of Quail Springs Church in Oklahoma City.

Lankford sees prayer for leaders as a Christian calling, regardless of his disagreements with the president as one of the fierce freshman conservatives.

"We can strongly disagree," he said. "That does not remove our respect for each other."

The book contains about a dozen prayers for the president: prayers for his relationship with God, for wisdom, for his safety, for his family, for his advisers, for his friends, for his ability to govern with justice and mercy.

Thoughtful, intelligent and persistent prayer for our leader is part of what it means for us to be salt and light in a needy world," Garriott writes in the book.

Between the prayers are short chapters on how to pray for specific issues. The book is carefully apolitical, but for one deft reference to abortion in a prayer: "We pray that we would defend the weak and homeless, both in and outside the womb."

White House spokesman Shin Inouye didn't know if Obama had read the book of prayers for him, but said, "President Obama deeply appreciates the prayers of millions of Americans, including from members of Congress, and each day joins Americans in prayer for our great country."

GuideStone's Mission: Dignity fills needs of Southern Baptists' retiring workers

DALLAS (BP) — Floyd Woodard was 25 years old when he felt God calling him into a life of ministry nearly six decades ago. Married just five years, Woodard was teaching a Sunday School class when he was approached about becoming a preacher.

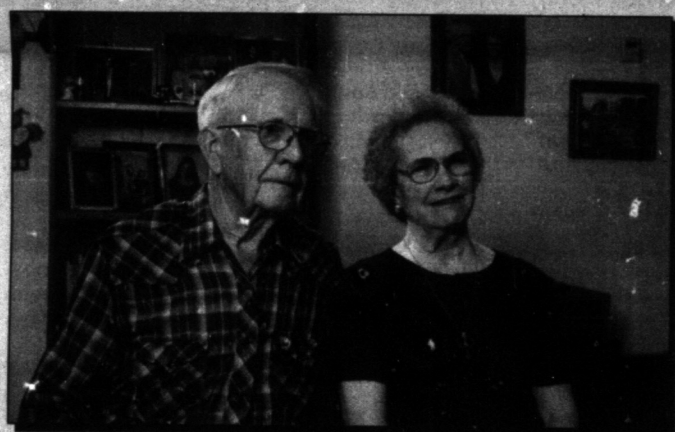
"I knew the Lord was dealing with me and so finally I came to the place that I decided I would answer the call, that God called me to preach," Floyd said. "I started pastoring back in 1955 in a church that had us preach two Sundays a month. They paid us \$15 a Sunday. We drove about 55 miles one way to get there."

When a church in Forsyth, Mont., offered \$150 a month in the mid-'60s, Woodard readily accepted the call. He fondly remembered talking to a church member about receiving a weekly check. "When I talked to him and asked him about giving me a check every week, he said, 'Well, there are five Sundays in some months,' and I said, 'We have to eat that Sunday, too!'"

At times, it was difficult for Woodard and his wife Ivey to make ends meet on the small salary he received, but God was always faithful.

"There were several times," Ivey recalled, "when I would go to the grocery store and I'd spend my last dollar for milk, and I didn't know where the next dollar was coming from, but it always came."

Over the years, the Woodards were not afraid of hard work and often took additional jobs to make ends meet. "We did some



Floyd and Ivey Woodard

work for different people," Floyd said, "like in the sugar beet fields and helping cut corn in the silage and stuff like that occasionally."

"I did a little carpenter work to help supplement our income. Roofed a few houses," he said, chuckling at the memory.

As with many small churches, food from members' gardens or farms also was part of the "pay" received by most preachers. For the Woodards, the meat served at the dinner table could be of an unusual variety. "When we first moved to Eureka (Mont.), a man from Great Falls had killed a deer," Ivey recounted. "He didn't need it, so he gave us that deer."

"It was so big it looked like a cow to us, but that was our meat for the winter," Ivey said as Floyd chimed in, "Even gave us a little elk and a little moose — we got to try out."

Only thing I never tried was the bear meat."

Retirement — after 52 years in the ministry — made getting the necessities of life even more difficult. When a fellow pastor died, his widow applied and began receiving help from Mission:Dignity. That prompted the Woodards to seek assistance as well.

Through Mission:Dignity, GuideStone Financial Resources assists about 2,000 retired Southern Baptist ministers and their wives who have critical financial needs. Most of these pastors served small congregations in decades past with little, if any, contributions toward a retirement plan. Sixty percent of Mission:Dignity recipients are widows. One of every four recipients is a pastor's widow age 85 or older.

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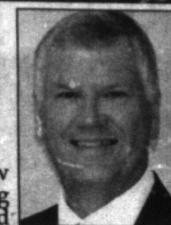
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BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE Stand for the Lord Exodus 32:7-20, 25-26

By Huey Dedmon

Our second lesson in the series on "How to Make Our Life Count" comes from Exodus 32. Moses has gone up the mountain at God's command. He has been gone a long time and the people get impatient and ask Aaron to make them a god to worship. God sees what His people are doing and tells Moses that He is going to destroy them because of their sin. Moses pleads with God to remember all the promises He has made to them and how bad it will look to the Egyptians if He destroys them after delivering them from Egypt. God changes His mind about destroying them because of Moses' intercession for them. At the end of last week's lesson Moses was trying to get out of doing what God want-



Dedmon

ed him to do and now we see Him standing boldly before God pleading for God's people.

Intercede on Behalf of Others
Exodus 32:7-14

In this section of scripture it would seem that Moses convinced God to change His Sovereign plan in not destroying the Israelites for their sin. I do not believe God ever intended to destroy His people. He was simply making a challenge to Moses to step up and be counted for Him. God's intention here was to stir Moses to action. God wanted Moses to see the people from His perspective. They were a rebellious people and needed a strong leader who would hold them accountable for their actions. Moses took God's challenge

and interceded for them. Most often our view of prayer is asking God to give us what we want or to bless our meager efforts to serve Him. The Herschel Hobbs Commentary reminds us that the great power of prayer is that it changes people and things. God has

ordained that some of what He wants done depends on human prayers. (HHC p113) Prayer is really a challenge for us to think of somebody else besides ourselves!

Confront the Sin
Exodus 32:15-20

While we see that God decided not to destroy His children, He still was going to hold them accountable for their sin. Moses returned from the mountain and was met by the peoples singing and celebration around the golden calf Aaron had made for them. He threw the stone tablets, on which God had written, to the ground and broke them into pieces. He destroyed the golden

calf and made the people drink the water he threw the ashes into. He was angered over the way they so quickly forgot how they had just been delivered from Egypt. Moses anger was not anger fueled by hate but anger fueled by disappointment. It was a righteous anger. He confronted them with their sin. Moses loved the people but he could not and would not condone their sin. Today we are so afraid to confront sin because it might offend someone. I remind you that the admission of our sinfulness is a key step in our salvation. We must stand up and confront sin while showing love and compassion for sinners.

Call for a Return to God
Exodus 32:25-26

There are so many times in my life that I look back and wish that I had taken a stand for God. The fear of being the only one to stand is a force Satan uses to keep us from serving God faithfully. Moses was confronted with the sin of the people and called for those who stand for God with him. The KJV uses the word "naked" and

the HCSB uses the words "out of control" to describe what Moses saw. The people were caught up in the moment of their rebellion. They had lost control of their emotions and their bodies. This is a great description of what happens when we allow sin to control our lives and not God. The Levites were the only ones that came and stood with Moses. How often, if I had taken the stand I should have, would I have found that I was not alone. Moses called for a return to God. The awesome thing is God took them back, but He still punished them for their sin.

In the verses that follow verse 26 the wrath of God was demonstrated on His people. The Levites followed their commitment to God by following His instructions. It must have been hard to kill their friends and family members. I must ask myself, "How committed am I really to taking a stand for the Lord?"

Dedmon is associate pastor for education and outreach, Brandon Church, Brandon.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE Do you show respect to others?

Romans 14:1-12

By Marion D. Duncan

In the church at Rome, there were two schools of thought about living the Christian life. One was that the liberty experienced when a person came to know Christ released him from the restrictions of the old laws concerning what one could and could not eat and the special observance of days by keeping multitudes of rules associated with that day. Paul makes it clear that this is in fact the standpoint of real and full Christian faith. But, there were those who had not yet realized and accepted the meaning of Christian freedom and liberty. They thought Christianity was about keeping rules and regulations. The liberal attitude of some frightened them because they were still trying to earn a



Duncan

right relationship with God, not yet accepting the way of grace. These two approaches to Christianity exist in the church today — one, a stricter and narrower approach; the other, a wider, more liberal one.

Paul met the conflict with a great principle. "No man has any right to criticize another man's servant. The servant is answerable and responsible to his master alone. Now all then are the servants of God. It is not open to us to criticize them or to find fault with them, still less to condemn them. That right belongs to God alone." (The Letter to the Romans, William Barclay)

There is so much more to Christianity than whether one eats meat or not, or worships on a certain day, or observes

feasts and rituals. "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble..." (1 Corinthians 10:32-32a)

The motive for what we do should come from personal conviction toward the Lord. There are great variations in belief in Christendom, but there can be unity. Paul's answer to the question of how that can be is the lordship of Christ. Consider the spokes of a wheel. Take a movable point on any two spokes. The closer the two points get to the hub, the closer they get to each other; the farther they get from the hub, the farther they are from each other. The Lord Jesus is the hub of the wheel of Christian fellowship. The important thing is for us to move closer to him, and the matter of unity will take care of itself. (Exploring Romans, John Phillips)

"For none of us lives to himself..." (14:7) It is impossible

for man to live isolated from everything and everyone around him. There are three directions a man cannot separate himself from his fellow man. He cannot isolate himself from the past. No man is a self-made man. Ulysses said, "I am a part of all I have met." He cannot isolate himself from the present. There is nothing a man can do that will affect only himself. From every man there goes out an influence which makes it easier for others to take the high way or the low way. He cannot isolate himself from the future. As a man receives life, he hands on to his children a heritage of physical life and of spiritual character. He is a link in a chain. The responsibility a Christian has is to maintain his relationship with the Lord so that he will not be a catalyst for disunity. (Barclay)

The more conservative brother is to be accepted into the fellowship through the understanding that unity, not uniformity, is what demonstrates oneness in the body of Christ. Criticism does not accomplish anything; it is pur-

poseless. "You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother?" (14:10a,b,NIV) How presumptuous it is to criticize another brother. "For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. It is written: 'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me, every tongue will confess to God.' So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God." (14:10c-12) The judgment spoken of here is of the believer's works, not of his sins which were judged at Calvary and remembered no more. The result at the return of Christ will be either reward or loss of it for the believer. Criticizing or judging others will be called into account at the judgment seat of God who knows everything about us all. It is indeed presumptuous for us to judge others because of what we see in our own lives when we search our hearts.

Duncan is a member and pastor's wife from First Church, Macon.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

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Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

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THE BAPTIST
Record

Irish music duo on mission to promote hymns

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The word, "hymn," usually doesn't lead to thoughts of "modern," but modern hymnwriters Keith and Kristyn Getty are trying to change that. That doesn't mean they want churches to stop singing the old hymns — just the opposite — but they do want churches to see that modern songs can have a similar lyrical depth.

The husband-wife team from Northern Ireland just released their third CD, *Joy: An Irish Christmas*, and in late November will embark on a U.S. Christmas tour. Christians who have never heard of the Gettys may nevertheless have sung one of their songs, *In Christ Alone*, which was co-written by Keith Getty and Stuart Townsend.

Baptist Press interviewed the Gettys Nov. 2 after they sang in chapel at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville. Following is a transcript.

Baptist Press: Why are you so passionate about hymns?

Keith Getty: I think the things we are most passionate about are, first, making sure that congregations are able to sing together and, secondly, making sure that the Word of Christ dwells in us richly. When you look at the New Testament, the radical thing about the church wasn't its performance capabilities, it wasn't buildings, it wasn't even artistry. It was the fact that these people from every background were coming together to sing. In other words, what congregational singing represents is actually what the church represents. The whole concept of congregational worship is to represent the church here on earth as to what it will one day be in heaven. So it is a unifying thing.

The second thing is, when we look at the models of hymns that we have in Scripture, we have all the Old Testament hymns — mostly hymns of faithfulness like the song of Moses and the song of Aaron, which go on for 30-40 verses. We have the Psalms, which is our Old Testament songbook. And then we have the early hymns of the New Testament, which take us through the central Gospel story in Philippians and Colossians. There is a strong sense of God's faithfulness, but there's just a much greater level of lyrical depth. Songs can be short, they can be



long. They can be any structure. That's not the issue. But we do have to write songs of substance, because there is a direct correlation with what we sing as to how we live our lives. In the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy, the people were told they had to learn the song. It was 20-30 verses of what God had done for His people. They were told to learn the song so it would be a witness against them if they ever fell away. That's how important what we sing is to how we live our lives.

Baptist Press: What distinguishes a hymn?

Keith Getty: There's no scientific answer. If you go to England, they will tell you that hymns are songs in the English tradition of hymn writing, and something like "Just a

Closer Walk with Thee" or "I Come to the Garden" or "Because He Lives" are Gospel songs, and modern worship songs are worship songs. If you go to America, everything written before 1980, for the most part, is called a hymn, and everything written after about 1980 ... suddenly is a worship song. So everybody has a different definition of it. Because they have an artistry that is slightly more timeless and slightly stronger, I kind of gravitate toward [hymns]. And I think there is something to be said about valuing the heritage that we have. I walk around Nashville, and there are all sorts of heritage sites — civil war battlefields, buildings, that represent something of our heritage. It seems a curious arrogance to me that musicians only want to sing songs that are contemporary; I say that to myself

as well, because I'm a writer and I want to use my own songs. We need to have some understanding of the past that we can learn from, because each generation will be visited through the eyes of history as having its strengths and weaknesses.

Baptist Press: So you see that we lose something when we don't sing hymns?

Keith Getty: I think when we don't listen to those who have gone before us and we don't have some sense of understanding from the past...

Kristyn Getty: And we don't acknowledge that we're part of something greater than ourselves. People have been creating music and art for generations. We can't assume that we operate in a vacuum and are not connected to anything but ourselves. [Singing hymns and recognizing the past] helps us be better, it helps us not be arrogant in how we consider ourselves. And it helps us also be mindful of what it is we're passing on to the next people.

Baptist Press: When you're writing a hymn, what is the goal?

Keith Getty: To write a piece of art that somehow helps a congregation of people be illuminated by some character of God, and respond to it in a song. In congregational worship, you're writing for an artist, and that artist is singing to an audience. In congregational worship, the artist is the congregation and the audience is God.

Baptist Press: What role do hymns play in teaching theology?

Keith Getty: We learn through many different things. Scripture is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path, and 20 percent of it is poetry. So, immediately, you have to look at it and ask, "On what levels do we learn?" So if you're asking us, should hymns be used as expository Bible teaching? No, they shouldn't be. They're pieces of art. A song with a great lyric and a bad melody is an awful song. The point is that your soul and your emotions are engaged with others around you to sing. It is a piece of art like poetry is a piece of art. It's creating a picture, it's creating an illustration.

FCC pulling the plug on churches' closed-captioning exemption

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has reversed a policy that allowed church broadcasts to receive exemptions from a closed captioning requirement, but a representative of the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB) said the development is not necessarily bad news.

"We don't believe that the action of the FCC shows hostility against Christian broadcasters. We think it's a recognition by the Federal Communications Commission that the process that was being used internally to review these applications for waiver was simply not the right process," Craig Parshall, senior vice president and general counsel for NRB, told Baptist Press.

"So it's not a matter of Christian broadcasters having

either done the wrong thing or being punished by the FCC. It's a matter of correcting a process that went awry, and they're trying to set the clock back now."

Since 1996, churches were granted exemptions from the requirement to provide closed captioning of their programming under a decision known as the Anglers Order stemming from the Anglers for Christ Ministries program that had argued for exemption.

The exemptions were handled by the FCC's Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, but the full commission overturned the Anglers Order Oct. 20 following objections by representatives of the hearing-impaired.

Under the closed captioning policy, programmers obtained exemptions if they could prove

that the cost of the captioning would cause undue economic hardship. The hearing-impaired groups said the policy essentially created a blanket exemption for nonprofit organizations.

The FCC has been mailing letters to programmers informing them of the policy reversal and giving them 90 days to comply with the closed captioning requirement or reapply for exemption.

Parshall said the development holds both good and bad news for religious broadcasters.

"The bad news is there are about 400 programmers/stations that have applied for exemptions and were granted them under a process that the FCC now has determined wasn't proper, not because of anything that the broadcasters did wrong but because the media

bureau within the FCC that oversees the application for exemptions wasn't following the right procedures," Parshall said, "so they're going back to square one."

"That's the bad news, I guess. The good news is that they have 90 days to file again for exemptions if they simply can't afford to do it. Some small broadcasters can't afford the price of closed captioning, and there's a provision for them to apply and show economic hardship."

Broadcasters will have to show that if they have to pay the expense of closed captioning, which can cost \$200 or \$300 per hour, their programming day would be disrupted, Parshall said. In other words, they may have to drop some programs or change programming as a result.

Most broadcasters obtain material from other sources, such as a church that provides a pastor's sermon. "The Christian station has to go back to the church or any other source of their programming and say, 'Can you please close caption your content from now on?'" Parshall said.

"If they say, 'No... we can't afford it either,' then they need to get a letter from that source and attach it to their request to show that they've done due diligence to try to get their programming people to be able to provide closed captioning as well," he advised.

Parshall urged broadcasters to take action sooner rather than later and to ensure that they submit paperwork to the FCC well in advance of the 90 days deadline.